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University Press Committee
Minutes of Meeting of June 7, 2005
Convened at 1:30 p.m. in Room 804-08, Campus Center

Attending the meeting were chair McFarland, members Afolabi, Avakian, Golowich, Goodenough, Harris, Jones, Stern, and Wise, director Wilcox, and editors Dougan and Wright. Copies of thirteen recently published titles were on display. The minutes of the meeting of January 19, 2005, were approved.

Wilcox reported that the Press expected to finish FY05 on budget and with no deficit, with net sales of roughly \$920,000. He said that vigorous efforts to raise subsidies on a title-by-title basis had enabled the Press to balance its budget. Nevertheless, he voiced continuing concern about FY06 and after, saying the Press was on a “financial collision course” unless a portion of its former subsidy were restored or some comparable source of funding were found. He reported that he had made a presentation to the presidents of the four colleges in the Five College consortium, inviting them to participate in a UMass/Five College Press. Although they expressed admiration for the publishing program, they declined to contribute financially.

A committee member asked how much support was needed on an annual basis, and Wilcox replied that \$200,000 would be a reasonable target—a viable amount, but still far below the average received by other university presses.

Turning to more positive news, Wilcox mentioned several recent awards and honors:

- (1) Daniel Horowitz’s *The Anxieties of Affluence* was selected as winner of the 2005 Eugene M. Kayden Award for the best book in the humanities published by an American university press. This is the second year in a row that this prestigious award has gone to a UMass Press book—the previous winner was Joel Dinerstein’s *Swinging the Machine*. The award includes a \$5,000 prize for Horowitz.
- (2) Allen Guttman’s *Sports: The First Five Millennia*, won the 2005 Book Award of the North American Society for Sport History. Guttman was presented with a check for \$500, which he promptly donated to the Press. *Sports* was also a History Book Club selection.
- (3) Jack Tager, author of *Massachusetts at a Glance*, received the Bay State Legacy Award in recognition of his contributions to the interpretation and presentation of Massachusetts history. The award is sponsored by the Massachusetts Foundation for the Humanities.
- (4) Eric Jay Dolin’s *Political Waters* was chosen by the American Library Association for its “Best of the Best from the University Presses: Books You Should Know About.” Twenty-seven of the 11,000 titles published annually by university presses were selected by a panel of librarians as “The Best of the Best” to be displayed at the ALA summer convention.
- (5) John Sloop’s *Disciplining Gender* was named winner of the National Communication Association’s 2005 Winans/Wichelns Award for Distinguished Scholarship in Rhetoric and Public Address. The award, which carries a \$1,000 prize for the author, has been given annually since 1966.

Wilcox announced the winners of the Juniper Prize competitions. The inaugural Juniper Prize for Fiction was won by Dwight Yates of Redlands, CA, whose manuscript *Bring Everybody* was selected from among 367 submissions. The winner of the 31st annual Juniper Prize for Poetry was Allan Peterson of Gulf Breeze, Florida, whose manuscript *All the Lavish in Common* was selected from among 315 entries. Both books will be published in 2006.

Due to a tight travel budget, Press editors attended only a few national meetings. Dougan reported on the Organization of American Historians convention in San Jose, and Wright commented on the American Literature Association meeting in Boston. Books were sent to other meetings via cooperative exhibit services, but members of the Press staff did not attend.

Under "Other Business," it was reported that the Press had reached agreement to issue a new paperback edition of Jane Holtz Kay's *Lost Boston*, originally published by Houghton Mifflin. The *Washington Post* described the book as "an elegant architectural history, excellently illustrated."

Turning to the manuscripts on the agenda, the committee considered seven projects, presented in alphabetical order by author.

The essay collection entitled *Institutions of Reading: The Social Life of Libraries in the United States*, edited by Thomas Augst and Kenneth E. Carpenter, was accepted with the understanding that the editors' introduction must be reviewed by one of the outside readers. It was also suggested that the table of contents be modified to indicate the time period of each essay and that the subtitle be revised to eliminate the multiple connotations of *Social Life*. The book comes with a subsidy of \$4,000.

A second essay collection, *Agent of Change: Twenty-Five Years of Print Culture Studies*, edited by Sabrina Baron, Eric Lindquist, and Eleanor Shevlin, was also approved. The committee discussed the importance of working Elizabeth Eisenstein's name into the subtitle. After considering several alternatives, the committee recommended *Agent of Change: Print Culture Studies and the Legacy of Elizabeth Eisenstein*. The book is to be published in association with the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress, which has pledged to provide a subsidy of \$8,000.

The committee was impressed by Lois Fink's spirited and articulate response to the outside readers' criticisms of her manuscript, provisionally entitled *Art, Science, and Bureaucracy: A History of the Smithsonian American Art Museum*. The project was approved with the understanding that a subsidy of \$5,000 would be secured and that the title would be revised to something like *The Smithsonian American Art Museum: 150 Years of Art, Science, and Bureaucracy*.

Jaime Harker's *America the Middlebrow: Women's Novels, Progressivism, and the Role of Authorship* elicited a lengthy discussion. Members recommended that the author clarify her use of terms that might be misinterpreted (e.g., "progressivism" and "sentimentalism"), that she be sure to address issues of race throughout her analysis and not just in her treatment of Jessie Faucet, and that she undertake a careful revision based on the valuable suggestions contained in the readers' reports. The manuscript was approved with the stipulation that the revised draft must be reviewed by one of the two outside readers and that additional funding should be sought to offset the anticipated deficit, given the limited market for specialized literary studies of this kind.

Timothy A. Hickman's *The Leprosy of Modern Days: Narcotic Addiction and Cultural Crisis in the United States, 1870-1920* was presented as a contribution to the Press's small but well-regarded list of titles in "addiction studies." One member asked how these books had sold and was told that the historical studies tended to do better than the literary ones. Committee members asked about Hickman's treatment of race and gender and about the need to sharpen the manuscript's central

argument. In view of the very positive tenor of the readers' reports, the project was approved with the understanding that the author would revise the manuscript in light of the readers' comments.

With respect to *The Worcester Slave Narratives*, edited by B. Eugene McCarthy, the key question was not about the significance of the narratives, but about how to frame them and present them most effectively. In view of the excellent report from John Stauffer, it was suggested that he might be invited to write a foreword to the volume. Members also agreed that each narrative should have a single headnote, rather than dual headnotes from a literary scholar and a historian, and that McCarthy should write a preface to explain the genesis of the project. The committee discussed possible titles that would highlight the book's emphasis on the experience of freedom (as opposed to the struggle to escape slavery). The project was approved with the expectation that appropriate revisions would be made and that money would be raised to underwrite the volume.

In considering the proposal for a reprint edition of the "Special *Walden* Sesquicentennial Issue" of the journal *Nineteenth Century Prose*, the committee noted that the quality of the essays was high, typesetting costs would be minimal, and classroom sales were likely. The project was approved.

Having dispensed with the manuscripts under consideration, the committee gave a round of applause to retiring member Golowich and expressed thanks to chair McFarland for his stalwart and much appreciated leadership. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:06 p.m. No date was set for the next meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Bruce Wilcox
Secretary

cc: Faculty Senate office